

SSC, Railway and State Exams Bi-weekly Current Affairs (1-15 March 2021)



Bi-Weekly One Liner Updates 1-15th March 2021

Dear readers,

Bi-Weekly One Liner Updates is a collection of important news and events that occurred in the **two weeks (1-15th) of March 2021**. This file is important for, **Banking, SSC, Railway & Insurance** exams.

Banking & Financial Awareness

1. Which public sector bank has signed a corporate agency agreement with the SBI General Insurance to retail its insurance products to the customers of the bank _____ **Indian Overseas Bank**.
Note:
 - IOB has signed a Bancassurance for the distribution of the non-life offerings with SBI General Insurance to offer a wide range of general insurance solutions and innovative products to the customers of the bank.
 - This partnership will improve the reach of insurance products in urban, tier II and III markets.
 - This will also create awareness to the customers about the personal lines of insurance.
2. Which health insurance company has announced India's first initiatives of upto 100% health insurance premium returns under the new version of its Flagship product 'Activ Health Policy' _____ **Aditya Birla Health Insurance**.
Note:
 - With this ABHICL became the only insurance company to offer up to 100% premium returns(HealthReturnTM), offers upto 100% reload of sum insured through its upgraded Activ Health Policy.
 - 'Activ Health' is Asia's first plan to offer mental illness counselling coverage and Industries first to cover unlimited homeopathy telemedicine.
3. The government of India has decided to infuse what amount into state-owned Export-Import Bank of India (Exim Bank) in the next financial year _____ **Rs. 1,500 crores**.
Note:
 - The amount is Rs 200 crore higher than the provision made by the government for the current fiscal. The government has earmarked Rs 1,300 crore capital infusion for the bank.
 - The (Rs 1,500 crore) provision is for Exim Bank as equity support/ subscription to increase the paid up capital of the bank to the level of its authorised capital.
4. The Reserve Bank of India came out with a slew of directions related to maintenance of liquidity coverage ratio, risk management, asset classification and loan-to-value ratio, among others, for _____ **Housing Finance Companies**.
Note:
 - These directions, which shall come into force with an immediate effect and it will be applicable to all the housing finance companies registered under section 29A of the National Housing Bank Act 1987.
 - HFCs are mandated to maintain a liquidity buffer in terms of liquidity coverage ratio (LCR). This will help to have sufficient high-quality liquid asset (HQLA) to survive an acute liquidity stress scenario lasting for 30 days.
5. As per the new guidelines for Housing Finance Companies released by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), by which year all HFCs irrespective of their asset size will have to maintain 100% liquidity coverage ratio (LCR) _____ **1st Dec 2025**.
Note:
 - HFCs are mandated to maintain a liquidity buffer in terms of liquidity coverage ratio (LCR). This will help to have sufficient high-quality liquid asset (HQLA) to survive an acute liquidity stress scenario lasting for 30 days.
 - Therefore, the non-deposit taking HFCs with an asset size of Rs 10,000 crore and above, and all deposit-taking HFCs irrespective of their asset size will have to maintain a minimum LCR of 50% by 1st Dec 2021 and to 100% by 1st Dec 2025.
6. The Securities and Exchange Board of India (SEBI) has eased the listing norms for large companies by enabling them to divest a minimum what percent in the Initial public offering (IPO) _____ **5%**.
Note:
 - The minimum public float for large firms with post-issue market capital exceeding Rs 1 trillion is reduced from 10% of post-issue market capital (existing provision) to Rs 10,000 crore. In addition to this, there will be 5% of the incremental amount beyond Rs 1 trillion.

- A company with a post-issue market cap of Rs 2 trillion will have to divest a minimum of 7.5%, instead of 10%.
7. Along with which bank and Ministry of MSMEs, the World Bank is planning to launch a \$100-million (\$1 billion) credit guarantee scheme to boost India's rooftop solar programme _____ **State Bank of India**.
- Note:**
- This scheme will enable micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs) and those firms which do not meet the lending criteria of banks and other financial institutions to avail concessional debt financing for setting up rooftop solar units.
 - WB credit guarantee scheme will be provided as a Green finance i.e. financing for sustainable climate.
8. Telangana Grameena Bank and Andhra Pradesh Grameena Vikas Bank became India's 1st RRBs to launch Digital Savings Account opening facility through Video-Know Your Customer (KYC) facility. These banks are sponsored by _____ **State Bank of India**.
9. Which payments and banking technology company has partnered with PayPal to enable International payments for its merchants _____ **Cashfree**.
- Note:**
- It will enable businesses using Cashfree's payment gateway to show prices of all products in 28 + currencies.
 - It will enable Businesses to add a PayPal Express Checkout option to their order pages and accept payments from users across 200 markets.
10. Which IT company has joined the "Partnering for Racial Justice in Business initiative" launched by WEF that will help in promoting a culture of inclusion, diversity, justice and equity for the people coming from different racial backgrounds at the workplace _____ **Wipro**.
- Note:**
- The initiative is aimed towards driving action and accountability for companies to confront racism at a systemic level, set new global standards for racial justice in business and accomplish necessary policy changes for inclusion and advancement of professionals with under-represented racial and ethnic identities.
11. The Arya Collateral Warehousing Services Pvt. Ltd. (Arya) has partnered with which bank to offer collateral management and warehousing services to support the farmers with effective market linkage _____ **Canara Bank**.
- Note:**
- Arya will support the farmers and FPOs to get financial assistance against their agricultural produce stored in warehouses managed by Arya.
 - Through the 450 FPO's that work with Arya, Canara Bank will leverage the reach of Arya to more than 350000 farmers.
12. Which bank has joined 'Liink', a peer-to-peer Blockchain-based data network of US based Investment Banking Company JPMorgan chase _____ **State Bank of India**.
- Note:**
- The partnership will help SBI to reduce transaction costs, speed up Consumer transactions (including International transactions).
 - SBI became the 1st bank in India to go live on the blockchain-based payment network of JPMorgan.
13. Which stock exchange signed an MoU with the SIDBI for cooperation in the various MSMEs initiatives _____ **National Stock Exchange**.
- Note:**
- The various initiatives of the NSE and SIDBI for the betterment of MSME and the cooperation between them will impact the development of the MSMEs and increase the reach of these programs.
 - The major MSME initiatives to solve the working capital problems faced by small businesses were SME Exchange, NSE Emerge and TreDs platform of Receivable Exchange of India Ltd (RXIL).
14. Which Private sector bank has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Army for salary accounts of Indian army personnel _____ **Kotak Mahindra Bank**.
- Note:**
- Private sector lender Kotak Mahindra Bank will handle the salary account of the Indian army personnel, the bank said.
 - The bank has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) with the Indian Army here for salary account.
15. What is the initial capital likely to put in the in the proposed bad bank that aims to help extract funds stuck in non-performing loans by nine banks and 2 NBFCs including SBI, PNB, and Bank of Baroda _____ **Rs 7,000 crore**.

Note:

- The entities include PSBs like State Bank of India, Punjab National Bank, Bank of Baroda, Canara Bank, Union Bank of India, Bank of India.
- Other than these, private sector lenders ICICI Bank, Axis Bank, IDBI bank are also a part of the combine.
- Meanwhile, the non-bank entities include state-owned financiers of power projects- Power Finance Corporation (PFC) and Rural Electrification Corporation (REC).

16. To support women entrepreneurs, which bank has announced the launch of mentoring programme 'SmartUp Unnati' _____ **HDFC Bank.**

Note:

- Under this, senior women leaders from HDFC Bank with expertise spanning domains will mentor women entrepreneurs in helping them achieve their goals over the next one year.
- This programme is available only to exist customers. 'SmartUp Unnati' will initially target more than 3,000 women entrepreneurs associated with the bank's SmartUp programme.

17. What is India's rank Globally in the latest Economic Freedom Index 2021 published by US conservative think-tank, The Heritage Foundation _____ **121st.**

Note:

- Globally, the Foundation rates India's economy as the 121st freest.
- Although its overall score is unchanged, improvements were made in business freedom.
- This was offset by declines in judicial effectiveness and other scores.

18. Which technology company has launched a new web platform 'Women Will' that will support one million rural women entrepreneurs in India to help them pursue their ambitions and improve their livelihoods _____ **Google.**

Note:

- Google will implement this through the 'Women Will' web platform launched at the virtual Google for India event on 8 March, International Women's Day.
- Available in English and Hindi, the Women Will platform is designed for women aspiring to explore entrepreneurship.

19. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) has collaborated with which entity to promote nano-entrepreneurship amongst youth in the financial services sector _____ **SahiPay.**

Note:

- As a part of collaboration, candidates will be provided access to free digital skilling on 'Online Entrepreneurship Program' through NSDC's eSkill India portal.
- It will provide youth an opportunity to explore self-employment for sustainable livelihood.

20. Which oil company has signed an MoU with Odisha Industrial Infrastructure Development Corporation (IDCO) to develop Paradip Plastic Park _____ **Indian Oil Corporation.**

Note:

- Keeping the enterprise and employment generation potential of the plastic sector in mind, Government of India has initiated the cluster development of the Industry through its Plastic Park scheme.
- Currently, six such parks have been approved by the Government of India, with Paradip Plastic Park being one of them.

21. Which entity has organized a national-level virtual workshop on asset monetization along with the Department of Economic Affairs (DEA) _____ **NITI Aayog.**

Note:

- The workshop elaborated on the strategic context of core and non-core asset monetization, along with detailed discussions on the need for and modality of such monetization by public sector entities, and the experiences of public and private sector entities in the space.
- The workshop discussed the various benefits and pre-requisites of leveraging private sector participation for monetization.

22. Which small finance bank has launched "Garima Saving Accounts", a women Saving Account to provide the financial needs of women _____ **Ujjivan Small Finance Bank.**

Note:

- The account offers various customised benefits for women which includes a maximum of 7% rate of interest on savings account.
- Free Cash Deposit of up to Rs.5 lakhs per month or 8 transactions, whichever is earlier at any Ujjivan SFB branch.

23. Which bank has launched the 'Vikas Asha' Loan Scheme, under which the bank will distribute loans of up to INR 10 Lakhs to Women Entrepreneurs _____ **Karnataka Vikas Grameen Bank (KVGB).**

Note:

- The scheme is exclusively for women to meet their business-related needs, for purchasing machinery/equipment/vehicle.
- It shall also be utilized for meeting the working capital requirements under Micro and Small Enterprises including retail trade.

24. AckoDrive, an online car sales platform, a product of ACKO Technologies and Services Private Limited partnered with which bank to issue free FASTags _____ **IDFC FIRST Bank.**

Note:

- The AckoDrive issues FASTags over the digital platform without issuance fee, paperwork or security deposit.
- The AckoDrive FASTags can be purchased by any private car owner by providing the personal information and vehicle details and initial wallet money of Rs.100 to recharge the FASTag.

25. As per the interim Economic Outlook published by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) the Indian economy will grow at what percent in Financial Year 2022 _____ **12.6%.**

Note:

- That would enable India to retain its earlier tag of the fastest growing large economy in the world.
- It, however, pegged economic growth rate to come down to 5.4 per cent in 2022-23, which would be higher by 0.6 percentage points than its earlier estimates.
- That year, India would share its fastest-growing large economy tag with Indonesia, according to the OECD.

26. Which bank has been removed from the Prompt Corrective Action (PCA) framework, by the Reserve Bank of India (RBI), after almost four years _____ **IDBI Bank.**

Note:

- The RBI had placed IDBI Bank under the framework in May 2017, after it had breached the thresholds for capital adequacy, asset quality (net NPAs were over 13% in March 2017), return on assets and leverage ratio.
- It was noted as per published results for the quarter ended December 31, the bank was not in breach of the PCA parameters on regulatory capital, net NPA and leverage ratio
- The LIC-owned IDBI Bank had reported a standalone net profit of ₹378 crore for the December quarter.

27. Magicbricks Realty Services limited has partnered with Razorpay and which bank to create a secure online solution "Pay Rent" feature for rent payments through credit cards _____ **HDFC Bank.**

Note:

- The online solution is created with a focus on the 10 million rental residential household market.
- The estimated market size of the payment of rent through credit card is around Rs.3000 crore.

28. Which bank has partnered with TRRAIN to support the youth from low income households, pandemic affected, and persons with disabilities through skill training and employment opportunities _____ **DBS Bank.**

Note:

- It is a part of the initiative 'DBS Stronger Together Fund'
- The partnership will lead to one-year-long, Pan-India program which is a combination of classroom and online training sessions.

29. Aquaconnect partnered with which bank to provide credit access to 1.6 million aquaculture farmers under the Kisan Credit Card (KCC) scheme _____ **Bank of Baroda.**

Note:

- In this regard, M V Murali Krishna, General Manager and Head of Rural and Agri Banking Department of Bank of Baroda signed the MoU along with Arpan Bhalerao, Chief Growth Officer, Aquaconnect.
- Kisan Credit Card was introduced in August 1998 and created by NABARD (National Bank for Agriculture and Rural Development)

30. Government has mandated Electronic-invoicing (e-invoicing) under the Goods and Services Tax (GST) regime for business entities with a turnover of _____ **INR 50 Crore & more.**

Note:

- It is the 3rd Phase of mandatory e-invoicing under the GST regime. The 1st phase of e-invoicing covered business entities with INR 500 Crore turnover & the 2nd phase covered entities with INR 100 Crore.

- E-invoicing is mandatory under Central Goods and Services Tax (CGST) Rules, 2017.

31. Name the e-Commerce & financial Service provider that has launched “Smart PoS” a new application for accepting contactless payments through smartphones and also launched the second version of its Internet of Things (IoT) based instant voice confirmation device, “Soundbox 2.0” _____ **Paytm**.

Note:

- Paytm also launched the second version of its Internet of Things (IoT) based instant voice confirmation device, “Soundbox 2.0”.
- The Smart PoS app is supported by “Paytm for Business” (P4B) app for managing seamless transactions.

32. Which bank has entered into a co-lending business partnership with Cholamandalam Investment and Finance Company Limited to make new customers all over India with technology from Nucleus Software _____ **Karur Vysya Bank**.

Note:

- The aim of the co-lending is lower the cost of capital and open new markets by enabling new loans at finer rates using technology to enable seamless integration with multiple partner banks.
- The Reserve Bank of India (RBI) announced this scheme, under which banks will be permitted to co-lend with all registered NBFCs (including HFCs) based on a prior agreement.

33. Which became India’s first bank to launch its own wearable payment device named ‘Wear ‘N’ Pay’, to make contactless transactions _____ **Axis Bank**.

Note:

- Axis Bank partnered with Thales and Tappy Technologies to design and create these products and they are available on the Mastercard platform.
- The wearables are embedded with a Flexi-chip which is directly linked with the customer’s bank account and can be used like a regular debit card.

34. Which bank topped the Ministry of Electronics & Information Technology (MeitY) Digital Payment Scorecard for 3 consecutive months _____ **State Bank of India**.

Note:

- The scorecard tracks the performance of the commercial banks on various digital parameters.
- SBI topped the list by recording the highest UPI transaction volume of around 64 crore with a user base of 13.5 crores.

35. As the new guidelines of the Securities and Exchange Board of India what is the investment limit for Mutual Funds in debt instruments with special features such as additional tier-I _____ **10%**.

Note:

- Mutual fund will not invest over 10 per cent of its NAV of the debt portfolio of the scheme in instruments with special features and not more than 5 per cent of its NAV of the debt portfolio in instruments issued by a single issuer.
- Banning close-ended schemes from investing in perpetual bonds, SEBI said the maturity of all perpetual bonds will be treated as 100 years from the date of issuance for the purpose of valuation.

36. Which automobile company has launched a holistic programme that supports new parents in their exciting journey both as a parent and also as a valued employee, titled as ‘Wheels of Love’ _____ **TATA Motors**.

Note:

- It will promote a progressive culture of care, inclusion and sensitization within the organization across levels.
- It is also presented in the form of a specially curated book with focus on growing family and career goals of employee.
- Other aspects: Announcing pregnancy, Dedicated Counselling Sessions

37. Cabinet has approved amendment to Insurance Act, 1938 to increase the permissible foreign direct investment (FDI) limit in insurance sector to _____ **74%**.

Note:

- Currently, FDI limit in the life and general insurance is 49% with ownership and management control with Indian
- It will allow foreign ownership and control with safeguards, and also provide insurance companies with committed funds to improve the penetration of insurance.
- Govt hiked FDI cap from 26% to 49% in 2015.

Obituaries

1. Renowned personality Vernon Jordan passed away recently, he was a veteran _____ **Social Activist**.
Note:
 - Vernon Jordan, who grew up in the segregated South to become an influential leader in the American civil rights movement, Washington politics and Wall Street passed away at age 85.
 - Jordan, who in 1980 was badly wounded by a white supremacist sniper in Indiana, died Monday night, according to the statement, journalist Andrew Ross Sorkin.
2. Veteran parliamentarian Nand Kumar Singh Chauhan passed away recently, he was Lok Sabha MP from which party _____ **BJP**.
Note:
 - He was suffering from COVID-19 and was airlifted to Medanta Hospital in Gurugram last month in a serious condition.
 - The leader started his political career in 1978 from the Shahpur Municipal Council and was later elected as member of the Madhya Pradesh Assembly.
 - He was an MLA from 1985 to 1996.
3. N.S. Lakshminarayana Bhatta passed away recently, he was a veteran poet of which language _____ **Kannada**.
Note:
 - Well-known Kannada poet, critic and translator N.S. Lakshminarayana Bhatta passed away in Bengaluru
 - The poet, many of whose bhavageetes (lyrical poems) were set to tune and popularised through cassettes in the 80s, was ailing for sometime. He is survived by his wife and two children.
 - Born in 1936 in Shivamogga district, he was a prolific writer, publishing several collections of poems besides critical works and translations.
 - He taught Kannada literature in Bengaluru university until he retired. Some of his best known songs are Thaye ninna madilali, Marege ninthu kayuthiruva karulu yaavudu, Baare nanna Deepika among others.
4. Renowned personality billionaire Olivier Dassault passed away recently, he belongs to which country _____ **France**.
Note:
 - The Dassault Aviation group has been a leading French plane manufacturer for the last 70 years and is behind the Falcon private jet, the Mirage warplane, and most recently the state-of-the-art Rafale fighter.
 - Forbes magazine estimated that Olivier Dassault was the 361st most wealthy person on the planet in 2020, with a fortune estimated at around five billion euros (\$6 billion) -- around the same as his three siblings.
5. Renowned personality Anshuman Singh passed away recently, he was former governor of which state _____ **Rajasthan**.
Note:
 - He passed away due to COVID-19 related pneumonia. He was born in 1935 in Allahabad, Uttar Pradesh.
 - Anshuman Singh served as the Governor of Rajasthan from 16th January 1999 to May 2003.
6. Renowned personality Marvelous Marvin Hagler passed away recently, he was a veteran _____ **middleweight champion**.
Note:
 - He is an American dominated middleweight champion from 1979 until his controversial defeat by Sugar Ray Leonard in April 1987
 - He fought 67 times during his 14-year professional career and won 62 out of them.
7. Renowned personality M.G. George passed away recently he was chairman of which finance company _____ **Muthoot Group**.
Note:
 - He was the third generation from his family to become the chairman of the Muthoot Group. He was also the Chairman of the FICCI Kerala State Council.
 - He was the trustee of the Indian Orthodox Church and was also a member of the National Executive Committee of the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry (FICCI).

Important Days

1. Zero Discrimination Day is celebrated every year on which date _____ **1st March**.

Note:

- Zero Discrimination Day is celebrated to promote and celebrate everyone's right, regardless of age, gender, sexuality, nationality, ethnicity, skin colour, etc.
- Zero Discrimination Day aims to raise the voice for the right to live life with dignity, despite one's choices, beliefs, profession, education, disability or even illness.
- The theme of Zero Discrimination Day 2021: "End Inequalities".

2. 45th Civil Accounts Day was celebrated on which date _____ **1st March**.

Note:

- The Indian Civil Accounts Service (ICAS) observes the "Civil Accounts Day" every year on March 01, 2021, since its inception in 1976. The year 2021 marks the 45th Civil Accounts Day celebrations. ICAS is one of the Civil Services of India, under the Department of Expenditure, Union Ministry of Finance.

3. World Hearing Day is celebrated every year on which date by the World Health Organisation (WHO) _____ **3rd March**.

Note:

- The theme of World Hearing Day 2021 is **Hearing care for ALL!: Screen, Rehabilitate, Communicate**.
- World Hearing Day 2021 will mark the launch of the first-ever **World Report on Hearing**.

4. World Wildlife Day is observed globally every year on _____ **3rd March**.

Note:

- World Wildlife Day also raise awareness about the benefits that the conservation of wild fauna and flora provides to people living on earth. The day also reminds us of the need to fight against wildlife crime and human-induced reduction of species causing various wide-ranging economic, environmental and social impacts.

5. What is the theme of the National Safety Day 2021 _____ **Sadak Suraksha**

Note:

- The National Safety Day (NSD) is celebrated every year on 4 March by the National Safety Council (NSC) of India. In 2021, we are observing the 50th National Safety Day.
- The purpose of the day Purpose is to instil a sense of safety awareness among people by providing them with safety, health and environment-related support services.

6. National Security Day (Rashtriya Suraksha Diwas) is celebrated every year on which date _____ **4th March**.

Note:

- The day aims to show gratitude to all the security forces, including policemen, para-military forces, commandos, guards, army officers, and other persons involved in security, who sacrifice their life in maintaining the peace and security of the people of the country.
- 4 March also marks the day when the National Security Council (NSC) of India was established, in 1966 by the Ministry of Labour under the Government of India.
- The first National Security Day (NSD) was held in 1972.

7. What was the theme of the Janaushadhi Week celebrated from March 1st to March 7th, 2021 to create more awareness about "Janaushadhi" _____ **"Jan Aushadhi -- Seva Bhi, Rozgar Bhi"**.

Note:

- On the occasion of Jan Aushadhi Divas 2021 Prime Minister Narendra Modi dedicated to the nation the 7,500th Janaushadhi Kendra at NEIGRIHMS in Shillong.
- The Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana aims to provide quality medicines at an affordable price.

8. What is the theme of the International Women's Day 2021 which is observed every year on 8th March _____

#ChooseToChallenge.**Note:**

- Every year, Women's Day is observed to celebrate the spirit of women every year on 8th March.
- The first-ever Women's Day was organised in 1911 by the early 20th century Marxist from Germany Clara Zetkin, who was born in Germany's Wiederau.
- Two years later, in 1913, the date was changed to March 8, and it continues to be celebrated as such every year.

9. Central Industrial Security Force (CISF) celebrated its 52nd Raising Day on _____ **March 10**.

Note:

- CISF or Central Industrial Security Forces was instituted in the year 1969 with a motto to provide integrated protection to the Public Sector Undertakings (PSUs).

- Keeping into consideration the evolving demands of the dynamic nature of security, the force has been re-oriented and updated.

10. National Gestational Diabetes Mellitus (GDM) Day is observed every year on which date _____ **March 10**.

Note:

- The aim of the day is to raise awareness about the link between maternal health and diabetes nationwide, and inviting pregnant women to hospitals and clinics for free screening.

11. World Kidney Day (WKD) is celebrated every year on _____ **second Thursday of March (11th March 2021)**.

Note:

- It is the global awareness campaign to raise awareness of the importance of kidneys to our health and to reduce the impact of kidney disease and its associated health problems worldwide.
- This year theme is 'Living Well with Kidney Disease'.
- This year's theme aims to focus on the measures that can be taken to live a fulfilling life with kidney disease.

12. International Day of Mathematics (IDM) is observed every year on _____ **March 14**.

Note:

- Theme for 2021 IDM: 'Mathematics for a Better World'
- The day was initiated by International Mathematical Union (IMU) to celebrate the importance of mathematics and its essential role in everyone's life.

New Appointments

1. Name the Indian Economist who has been appointed as the Assistant Secretary-General and Head of the New York Office of the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) _____ **Ligia Noronha**.

Note:

- Ms Noronha will succeed fellow Indian and development economist Satya Tripathi to whom Secretary-General Guterres is "grateful for his leadership and dedicated service during his tenure.
- She has worked since 2014 as Director of UNEP's Economy Division based in Nairobi, leading UNEP's work on climate mitigation and energy transitions; on inclusive green economies, sustainable consumption and production, as well as on trade and sustainable finance, and the nexus of environment, pollution and health.

2. Who was appointed as the Managing Director General of Asian Development Bank (ADB) _____ **Woochong Um**.

Note:

- He will assume office immediately and report to ADB President Masatsugu Asakawa.
- Um will support Asakawa to institute bank-wide coherence on key initiatives and issues. He will play a key role in enhancing ADB's internal and external communications across all activities that involve operations, knowledge, fund-raising and institutional reforms.

3. Who has been appointed as the Brand Ambassador of Glenmark Pharmaceuticals Limited _____ **Rohit Sharma**.

Note:

- Sharma will be the official face of the brand as part of its 360 degree communication.
- Glenmark said Candid Powder brand is a market leader in its category, with a market share of 64 per cent in the medicated powder category.

4. Who has been appointed as first Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of the Federal Reserve Bank _____ **Naureen Hassan**.

Note:

- The Indian-origin veteran of the financial services industry has been appointed by the board of directors of the Federal Reserve Bank of New York as the first vice president and chief operating officer, effective from 15 March.
- The appointment was approved by the Board of Governors of the Federal Reserve System.

5. Who has been appointed as Chairman of Asia Pacific Rural and Agricultural Credit Association (APRACA) _____ **G R Chintala**.

Note:

- Chintala is succeeding Bank of Ceylon CEO DPK Gunasekera in office.
- It is an international organisation, which does a lot of information exchange, takes capacity building initiatives, and creates new institutions.

6. Who has been appointed as the chief of Asset Reconstruction Co India Ltd (ARCIL) _____ **Pallav Mohapatra.**
Note:
- Mohapatra, a former State Bank of India (SBI) executive retired as Central Bank CEO at the end of February. The government has waived his mandatory one year cooling off period.
 - Founded in 2002, Arcil is India's oldest asrt reconstruction company. It currently manages assets of Rs. 12,000 crore. Its total employees are 230.
7. Who has been appointed as the Chairman of the Panel of External Auditors of the United Nations _____ **Girish Chandra Murmu.**
Note:
- Currently, the panel consists of countries including India, Germany, Chile, China, the United Kingdom, France, Philippines, Switzerland, Italy, Ghana, Indonesia, Canada and Russia.
 - As the chairman, India's CAG plays a key role in achieving the panel's objective of greater degree of collaboration and coordination among members and exchange of information on audit methods and findings.
8. Who was sworn-in as the chief minister of Uttarakhand _____ **Tirath Singh Rawat.**
Note:
- Tirath Singh Rawat, Lok Sabha MP from Garhwal and a former state BJP chief, was administered oath of office by Governor Baby Rani Maurya at the Raj Bhavan.
 - Rawat was 'unanimously' chosen as the CM of Uttarakhand following a BJP legislature party meet.
9. Who has been appointed as the new Chief Statistician of India for a period of two years _____ **G P Samanta.**
Note:
- Samanta was till now an adviser in the RBI's Department Of Statistics and Information Management.
 - Samanta is India's fourth CSI.
10. Who has been appointed as the President of International Olympic Committee (IOC) until 2025 _____ **Thomas Bach.**
Note:
- His current term as the President of IOC will finish on the closing day of the Tokyo Olympic Games on 8th August 2021 and his second term as the President will start on 9th August 2021 and will conclude in 2025.
 - He was the only candidate of the IOC presidential election which was held during the 137th IOC session held in Athens.
11. Who has been appointed as the next director and chief executive of the Indian Council for Research on International Economic Relations (ICRIER) _____ **Deepak Mishra.**
Note:
- He will take over from Rajat Kathuria who has been the director & chief executive of ICRIER since September 1, 2012,
 - Mishra has held various positions at the World Bank, including co-director of the World Development Report 2016 (Digital Dividends), Country Economist for Ethiopia, Pakistan, Sudan and Vietnam.

Important News – India

1. Suganya Bharat App has been launched by which ministry _____ **Ministry of Social justice and Empowerment.**
Note:
- Suganya Bharat APP — a Crowdsourcing Mobile Application is a means for sensitising and enhancing accessibility in the 3 pillars of the Accessible India Campaign i.e. built environment, transportation sector and ICT ecosystem in India.
 - The app provides for five main features, 4 of which are directly related to enhancing accessibility, while the fifth is a special feature meant only for Divyangjan for COVID related issues.
2. In association with which IIT the Ministry of Information and Broadcasting is to form a Centre of Excellence in gaming and other related areas _____ **IIT Bombay.**
Note:
- Addressing the opening ceremony of virtual exhibition and prize announcement of Khel Khel Mein through video conference yesterday, Information and Broadcasting Minister Prakash Javadekar said, IIT will start the courses from this year itself.

3. Which ministry has convened the 5th Asia Economic Dialogue (AED) 2021 in association with India and Pune International Centre (PIC) on the theme "Post Covid-19 Global Trade and Finance Dynamics _____ **Ministry of External Affairs.**
- Note:**
- Its inaugural session was addressed by Union Minister Dr. Subrahmanyam Jaishankar, MEA on "Resilient Global Growth in a Post-Pandemic World".
 - The dialogue saw the discussions between COVID-19's impact on trade and finance, on the world and on Asia as well as strategies to deal with this impact.
4. Where did union government has invested Rs. 400 crores to create India's first Fisheries Hub under the Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY) _____ **Goa.**
- Note:**
- Out of this, Rs 41.47 crore has been already approved under Pradhan Mantri Matsya Sampada Yojana (PMMSY)"
 - Goa has the potential to become the fisheries hub of the country
 - On basis of the discussions with the State Government, it has been decided to develop 30 new landing centres for fisheries as well as for tourism purposes.
5. Who is the chairman of the reconstituted governing council of the National Institution for Transforming India or NITI Aayog _____ **Narendra Modi.**
- Note:**
- According to a notification of the Cabinet Secretariat, chief ministers of all states and those of the Union Territories of Jammu and Kashmir, Delhi and Puducherry are full time members of the council.
 - The Lieutenant Governors of Andaman and Nicobar Islands, Ladakh, and the administrators of Chandigarh, Dadra and Nagar Haveli, Daman and Diu and Lakshadweep will be special invitees of governing council.
6. Which entity has launched an 'AI Gamechangers' program to promote artificial intelligence (AI)-led innovation in the country _____ **NASSCOM.**
- Note:**
- Microsoft is the innovation partner for the program,
 - As part of the 'AI for India' mission, the program seeks to recognize impactful and scalable AI-based innovation in the country.
 - Nasscom and Microsoft will work closely to develop and promote the AI Gamechangers program, built on a shared commitment towards accelerating the adoption of AI across key sectors.
7. Who inaugurated the second edition of 'Maritime India Summit 2021' _____ **Narendra Modi.**
- Note:**
- Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the second edition of the summit via video conferencing.
 - Prime Minister also launched e-book of maritime vision 2030, which is aiming to make the Indian maritime industry at par with the top global benchmark in the next 10 years.
8. The International Commission on Large Dams (ICOLD) Symposium on Sustainable Development of Dams & River Basins was held in _____ **New Delhi.**
- Note:**
- Minister for Jal Shakti, Gajendra Singh Shekhawat was the Chief Guest of the Event.
 - The event acts as a forum to share expertise on latest technologies in Dam construction, dam safety measure etc.
 - Advanced technologies can be implemented in Dams to generate clean and cost effective energy, thereby ensuring India's commitments to the Paris Climate Agreement.
9. The seven-days International Yoga Festival was held in which city of India _____ **Rishikesh.**
- Note:**
- Nearly 400 yoga enthusiasts participated in the event.
 - Festival was inaugurated by Agriculture Minister Subodh Uniyal, head of Akhil Bharatiya Akhada Parishad (ABAP) Narendra Giri and Patanjali Yogpeeth chairman Acharya Balakrishna.
10. According to the 'Ease of Living Index 2020' released by the Government of India (GoI) which city has been adjudged as the most liveable city in India among million-plus population category _____ **Bengaluru.**
- Note:**
- Of the 49 cities ranked on livability index in the million-plus population category, Delhi ranks 13th.
 - At the bottom of the list are Amritsar, Guwahati, Bareilly, Dhanbad and Srinagar.

11. According to the 'Ease of Living Index 2020' released by the Government of India (GoI) which city has been adjudged as the most liveable city in India the category of cities with population of less than million _____ **Shimla**.

Note:

- According to the the 'Ease of Living Index 2020' released by the Government of India (GoI), Shimla topped the category of cities with population of less than million. It is followed by Bhubaneswar, Silvassa, Kakinada and Salem.
- At the bottom of the list of 62 cities are Aligarh, Rampur, Namchi, Satna and Muzaffarpur.

12. According to the 'Municipal Performance Index Report released by the Union Ministry of Housing and Urban Affairs, which city's civic body has emerged as the best performing municipality among all million-plus municipalities _____ **Indore**.

Note:

- The Municipal Performance Index report ranking 114 civic bodies was released by the Union housing and urban affairs minister.
- The ranking has been done on parameters of service delivery, planning, financial systems, and governance practices.

13. Which becomes the first railway station in Maharashtra to be awarded with Gold certification as per CII's Indian Green Building Council (IGBC) ratings _____ **Chhatrapati Shivaji Maharaj Terminus Railway Station**.

Note:

- Central Railway has implemented various green initiatives across its zone, with plantation creating green areas, installation of solar panels, etc.
- IGBC ratings gives impetus to the national priorities like energy efficiency, water conservation, etc.

14. With which ministry the Central Silk Board has signed a memorandum of understanding (MoU) on a convergence model for the implementation of Agroforestry in the silk sector under the ongoing Sub-Mission on Agroforestry (SMAF) Scheme _____ **Ministry of Agriculture**.

Note:

- The signing of this MoU aims to incentivize the farmers to take up sericulture based Agroforestry models thereby contributing to the Make in India and Make for the World vision of the Prime Minister.

15. As on 26.02.2021, what percent accounts with an amount of Rs. 20,749 crores have been sanctioned to women entrepreneurs under Stand Up India Scheme _____ **more than 81%**.

Note:

- Stand Up India Scheme was launched on 5 April 2016 to promote entrepreneurship at grass root level for economic empowerment and job creation.
- This scheme seeks to leverage the institutional credit structure to reach out to the underserved sector of people such as Scheduled Caste, Scheduled Tribe and Women Entrepreneurs so as to enable them to participate in the economic growth of nation.

16. As on 26.02.2021, what percent of accounts with an amount of Rs. 6.36 lakh crore have been sanctioned to women entrepreneurs under MUDRA scheme since inception _____ **about 68%**.

Note:

- PMMY was launched on April 8, 2015 for providing loans up to 10 lakh to the non-corporate, non-farm small/micro enterprises.
- These loans are classified as MUDRA loans under PMMY.
- These loans are given by Commercial Banks, RRBs, Small Finance Banks, MFIs and NBFCs.

17. Maitri Setu has been built over which river that connects Sabroom in India with Ramgarh in Bangladesh _____ **Feni**.

Note:

- The name 'Maitri Setu' symbolizes growing bilateral relations and friendly ties between India and Bangladesh.
- The construction was taken up by the National Highways and Infrastructure Development Corporation Ltd at a project cost of Rs. 133 Crores.

18. How many Janaushadhi Kendra have been open as on 7th March 2021 under the Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana _____ **7500**.

Note:

- The Pradhan Mantri Bhartiya Janaushadhi Pariyojana aims to provide quality medicines at an affordable price.
- From 86 centres in 2014, the number of stores under the scheme has grown to 7,500, covering all districts of the country.

19. What is India's rank among 40 Asia-Pacific countries in the Economic Freedom Index 2021 published by US conservative think-tank, The Heritage Foundation _____ **26th**.

Note:

- In the 2021 Index, India came in around the middle of the pack among Asia-Pacific countries ranking 26th out of 40 countries, scoring 56.5 points.
- Globally, the Foundation rates India's economy as the 121st freest.

20. What is India's rank in the 'UNCTAD B2C E-COMMERCE INDEX 2020- Spotlight on Latin America and the Caribbean' _____ **71st**.

Note:

- The index measures an economy's preparedness to support online shopping where B2C stands for Business to Consumer. UNCTAD is an acronym for United Nations Conference on Trade and Development.
- The index has been topped by Switzerland for the first time which has surpassed The Netherlands. Notably 97% of the Swiss population used the internet in 2019.

21. What was the theme for the 76th Annual Conference of Association of Physicians of India (API) _____ **'Engaging Minds: Empowering Medicine'**.

Note:

- It was addressed by Union Minister of State (IC) Development of North Eastern Region (DoNER), MoS PMO, Personnel, Public Grievances, Pensions, Atomic Energy and Space, Dr Jitendra Singh.
- While addressing he mentioned the contribution of Physicians to the Atma Nirbhar Bharat Campaign.

22. International Conference on Multifunctional Electronic Materials & Processing (MEMP 2021) was held in which city of India _____ **Pune**.

Note:

- MEMP-2021 provided an opportunity to scientists, researchers, academicians and young students to interact with eminent scientists/technologists working in the field of multifunctional electronic materials for various applications & their processing for making devices.

23. REC Ltd and Power Finance Corporation (PFC) signed an agreement with which country for the financing of 600-megawatt (MW) Trashiyangtse Hydroelectric Project _____ **Bhutan**.

Note:

- KHEL is a 50:50 joint venture between SJVN India and Druk Green Power Corporation (Bhutan) set up for developing the 600-MW Kholongchhu hydroelectric project in the eastern Bhutan.
- REC Ltd along with PFC has signed memorandum of understanding (MoU) with Kholongchhu Hydro Energy Ltd for financing of 600-MW hydroelectric project at Trashiyangtse, Bhutan.

24. Which trade association has launched a vendor onboarding mobile app for its upcoming e-commerce portal 'Bharat e Market' _____ **Confederation of All India Traders (CAIT)**.

Note:

- The app will enable businesses and service providers to register on the portal and create their own "e-dukaan".
- Its 'purely Indian' Bharat e Market portal will comply with all the rules and regulations of the country.

25. Name the mobile app launched by the Department of Food & Public Distribution, Ministry of Consumer Affairs, Food & Public Distribution under the 'One Nation One Ration Card (ONORC)' plan _____ **Mera Ration**.

Note:

- The mobile app has been developed by the Department of Food & Public Distribution along with the National Informatics Centre (NIC).
- Beneficiaries of the National Food Security Act (NFSA), with a focus on Migrant workers, Fair Price Shop (FPS) dealers & other relevant stakeholders.

26. With which Rail track company, the National High-Speed Rail Corporation Limited (NHSRCL) has signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) for Track works for the Mumbai-Ahmedabad High-Speed Rail (MAHSR) _____ **Japan Railway Track Consultant Co. Limited (JRTC)**.

Note:

- Under the agreement, JRTC will provide design & drawing of major High-Speed Rail (HSR) track components like RC Track bed, track slab arrangement & Continuous Welded Rail (CWR) forces.
- It will strengthen the 'Make in India' initiative & ensure the transfer of technology from the Japanese high-speed rail system to India.

27. According to PwC's (PricewaterhouseCoopers) 24th Annual Global CEO Survey, India emerged as the what is India's rank as the most attractive growth destination in the world ____5th.

Note:

- The USA emerged as the Number one market favoured by CEOs over the next 1 year followed by China, Germany.
- The survey covered 5, 050 CEOs in 100 Countries & Territories including India.
- Japan took the 6th position overtaking Australia.

28. Who will chair the advisory committee to chalk out a plan for studying the mythical Sarasvati river _____ **Prahlad Singh Patel.**

Note:

- The ASI had first set up the committee on December 28, 2017 for a period of two years.
- The committee would continue to be chaired by the Culture Minister and include officials from the Culture, Tourism, Water Resources, Environment and Forest, Housing and Urban Affairs Ministries; representatives of the Indian Space Research Organisation; officials from the governments of Gujarat, Haryana and Rajasthan; and an ASI official.

29. Which Airport has launched India's first dedicated Express Cargo Terminal exclusively for export and import of international couriers _____ **Kempegowda International Airport, Bengaluru.**

Note:

- The 2 lakh square feet built to suit facility terminal will be operated by Express Industry Council of India
- It has a dedicated space for customs offices with direct access to both Landside and Airside wing

30. 4th Global Ayurveda Festival (GAF) was inaugurated by PM Narendra Modi in _____ **Kozhikode, Kerala.**

Note:

- It has been organized from 12 to 19 March 2021
- GAF is the largest Ayurvedic event ever held anywhere across the world and witness the largest gathering of experts, stakeholders, and business explorers from Ayurveda.
- Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FICCI) is the festival and industry partner

Important News – State

1. Which state government has launched "Mukhyamantri Antyodaya Parivar Utthan Yojana" aimed at uplifting 1 lakh BPL families of the state _____ **Haryana.**

Note:

- One of the 4 scheme is Mukhyamantri Antyodaya Parivar Utthan Yojana/
- The first phase of the scheme to begin on April 1, 2021.
- The Scheme is aimed at uplifting 1 lakh BPL families of Haryana; these families will be selected through the Parivar Pehchan Patra (PPP) portal.

2. Which state government has launched Dr BR Ambedkar Awas Navinikarn Yojana _____ **Haryana.**

Note:

- The Schemes are aimed at satisfying the needs of the people under Below Poverty line (BPL).
- He also highlighted the state's initiatives to increase income of BPL families by at least Rs. 8000 to Rs. 9000/month.

3. New Science Centre has been inaugurated in which city of Tripura _____ **Udaipur.**

Note:

- The Udaipur Science Centre has been developed at a cost of Rs 6 crore funded jointly by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India and Department of Science, Technology and Environment, Tripura Government and with this; National Council of Science Museums (NCSM) has now set-up science centres in all the north eastern states.
4. Which state government has approved a bill that reserves 75 percent of the private sector jobs with gross salary upto ₹ 50,000 per month for the people of the state _____ **Haryana**.
- Note:**
- The bill, tabled by Mr Chautala last year, makes it mandatory for the private sector companies to reserve 75 percent of jobs with salary upto ₹ 50,000 per month for natives of Haryana.
 - It also contains a clause companies can invoke if suitable local candidates cannot be found. In such cases they may hire from outside so long as they inform the government of such a step.
5. The International Business Machines (IBM) India partnered with which state government to provide free online courses to students, Job seekers & Entrepreneurs of the state _____ **Goa**.
- Note:**
- This initiative is aimed at upskilling 10,000 youths across 10 institutions in 1 year through IBM SkillBuild Program.
 - Personalised coaching and experimental learning module is provided on Information & Communication Technology (ITC).
 - The program has over 1lakh beneficiaries in Indian in 2021 alone.
6. Which state has launched India's maiden Engineering Research & Development (ERD) policy to raise R&D contribution to 45% in 5 year _____ **Karnataka**.
- Note:**
- This policy has the potential to create over 50,000 jobs in ERD space
 - According to Nasscom, ER&D has the potential to become \$100-billion industry
 - New policy has identified 5 key focus sectors: aerospace and defence; auto, auto components and EV; biotechnology, pharma, medical devices; semiconductors, telecom; software products.
7. The President of India Ram Nath Kovind laid the foundation stone for the conservation works of Singorgarh Fort which is located in which state of India _____ **Madhya Pradesh**.
- Note:**
- The President also inaugurated the newly carved Jabalpur Circle of Archaeological Survey of India.
 - He also addressed the State Level Tribal Conference at Singrampur village in Damoh.
 - The program was organized by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India and the Tribal Affairs Department of Madhya Pradesh.
8. India's first Forest Healing centre was inaugurated in which state _____ **Uttarakhand**.
- Note:**
- It was developed by the Research Wing of Uttarakhand Forest Department in an area of around 13 acres.
 - The centre is based on the concept of healing and revitalizing the overall health and well being of people by bringing them into direct contact with nature.
9. A centre of excellence for the dairy sector will be set up in which state in collaboration with Denmark _____ **Rajasthan**.
- Note:**
- Denmark Ambassador Freddy Svane discussed the idea at a meeting with chief minister Ashok Gehlot
 - The possibilities of Denmark's cooperation in the field of water conservation and purification were also discussed in the meeting.
10. Arcelor Mittal Nippon Steel (AMNS) going to set up an integrated steel plant in which state _____ **Odisha**.
- Note:**

- In a major boost to Odisha's industrial landscape, the ArcelorMittal Nippon Steel India Limited (AMNS India) signed an MoU with the state government to set up a 12 mtpa integrated steel complex in Kendrapada district with an investment of Rs 50,000 crore.
- The deal was signed here in presence of chief minister Naveen Patnaik and executive chairman of ArcelorMittal LN Mittal.

11. Which state government has announced the setting up of District Investment Promotion Agencies (DIPAs) in its 30 districts to promote and facilitate investment across the State _____ **Odisha**.

Note:

- According to the Industries Department, DIPA, in each of the 30 districts across the state, shall operate under the leadership of the respective District Collector with other senior district officials including SPs, DFOs and line Department officials being constituent members.
- The District Collector shall be supported by a team of professionals for investment facilitation, project monitoring and promoting local entrepreneurship.

12. Which become the first state of India to incorporate the Gender Budget in its annual budget of the fiscal year 2021 to 2022 with an aim to provide better service to women _____ **Andhra Pradesh**.

Note:

- International women's day, Andhra Pradesh (AP) Chief Minister YS Jagan Mohan Reddy announced that the state would become the first state of India to incorporate the Gender Budget in its annual budget of the fiscal year 2021 to 2022 with an aim to provide better service to women.

13. Arjuna Sahayak Irrigation Project is being built in which state _____ **Uttar Pradesh**.

Note:

- With an outlay of Rs 2,600 crore the irrigation project is scheduled for complete in one or two months.
- The Arjuna Sahayak irrigation project on the river Dhasan will offer irrigation facilities to 1.5 lakh farmers of as many as 168 UP villages of Hamirpur, Banda and Mahoba.

14. India's Largest Floating Solar Power Plant of 100 MegaWatt (MW) capacity being constructed in which state _____ **Telangana**.

Note:

- The solar project is commissioned by the energy conglomerate National Thermal Power Corporation (NTPC).
- The solar project which is estimated to cost around Rs 423 cr will have 4.5 lakh photovoltaic panels.
- The solar panels will cover 450-acre area of the reservoir and can be expanded in the future.

15. 'WE Hub' is an initiative of which state that has partnered with Australian government to launch "UPSurge" a 12-week pre-incubation program conducted across India _____ **Telangana**.

Note:

- The program is targeted towards Women Entrepreneurs to minimise financial risk while selling novel products & achieve financial independence.
- Australia is the first International Partner of WE Hub, when they jointly launched the "Community Slate" program that was concluded in 2020.

16. Uttarakhand Samagra Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA) signed an MoU with which technology giant to improve the education standards among the female children of the state _____ **IBM**.

Note:

- The collaboration, 'IBM STEM for Girls' program, will be introduced in 130 secondary and higher secondary schools across five districts in the state.
- The five districts are Dehradun, Pauri, Haridwar, Almora and Udham Singh Nagar.
- The program will advance the skills and careers of close to 25,600 students in Science, Technology, Engineering, and Math (STEM) fields.

17. Which state government has launched “Maha Samruddhi Mahila Sashaktikaran scheme” to empower the women in rural areas _____ **Maharashtra**.

Note:

- The scheme commenced on 8th March 2021, the International women’s Day 2021.
- The aim of the scheme is to promote the listing of wife’s name along with husbands’ names on the 7/12 extract and to promote the inclusion of wife’s name on house property documents.

18. Which state has won the 69 Men’s National volleyball championships held in KIIT University, Bhubaneswar _____ **Haryana**.

Note:

- Haryana men has won the 69 National volleyball championships at the KIIT University, Bhubaneswar/
- Haryana men defeated Assam
- Tamil Nadu, the men’s defending champion, had lost to Haryana in the quarterfinal.

Important News – World

1. Which country has successfully launched its first ever Arctic-monitoring satellite that will monitor the Arctic’s climate and environment _____ **Russia**.

Note:

- A Soyuz-2.1b carrier rocket with the "Arktika-M" satellite on board blasted off from the Baikonur Cosmodrome in Kazakhstan.
- The Arktika-M spacecraft was delivered to the orbit at 12.14 PM.
- The Arktika-M will provide round-the-clock continuous monitoring of the northern territory of Russia and the seas of the Arctic Ocean.

2. The Swedish automaker, Volvo has announced that it will make only electric vehicles by _____ **2030**.

Note:

- The automaker phasing out the production of all cars with internal combustion engines — including hybrids.
- Volvo’s announcement follows General Motors’ pledge earlier this year to make only battery-powered vehicles by 2035.

3. To which African country, India has sent a consignment of 1,000 metric tonnes of rice and 100,000 hydroxychloroquine as humanitarian assistance _____ **Madagascar**.

Note:

- The prompt Indian assistance to the Madagascar government was conveyed by External Affairs Minister S Jaishankar in a phone conversation with Madagascar's Foreign Minister Tehindrazanarivelo Djacoba A S Oliva.

4. Which the partner country of the second edition of 'Maritime India Summit 2021' _____ **Denmark**.

Note:

- Prime Minister Modi inaugurated the second edition of the summit via video conferencing.
- Prime Minister also launched e-book of maritime vision 2030, which is aiming to make the Indian maritime industry at par with the top global benchmark in the next 10 years.

5. With which country India has signed an agreement for cooperation in the field of agriculture and allied sectors _____ **Fiji**.

Note:

- The Union Cabinet, chaired by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, approved the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the Ministry of Agriculture of Indian government and Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Fiji in this regard.
- The MoU between India and Fiji provides for cooperation in various areas including promotion of joint ventures between private sectors of both countries.

6. Which country is building world's first platypus sanctuary to promote breeding and rehabilitation as the duck-billed mammal faces extinction due to climate change _____ **Australia.**

Note:

- The Taronga Conservation Society Australia and the New South Wales State government would build the specialist facility, mostly ponds and burrows for the semi-aquatic creatures, at a zoo 391 km (243 miles) from Sydney, by 2022, which could house up to 65 platypuses.

7. India and which country have agreed to collaborate in the area of Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) in the Oceanic space for the next 5 years _____ **Norway.**

Note:

- National Centre for Coastal Research (NCCR), Chennai will be preparing the MSP framework for Puducherry & Lakshadweep in the initial phase of the project.
- The framework of these 2 environmentally critical areas (Pondicherry & Lakshadweep) will be replicated to other coastal regions of India.
- The 2 places have been chosen due to their potential to Flourish in multiple sectors such as Industries, Fisheries & Tourism.

8. Which country India described as the "Priority One" partner in the defence sphere _____ **Sri Lanka.**

Note:

- The SLAF is celebrating its 70th Anniversary on March 2 and to commemorate the historical event, a Fly Past and an Aerobatic Display is being organised for the first time in the country at a grand scale.

9. The 14th UN Congress on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice was held in which city of world _____ **Kyoto, Japan.**

Note:

- This year, the event was held in a hybrid format.
- Key issues related to criminal justice, strategies for crime prevention and international cooperation in promoting the rule of law and preventing all forms of crime are expected to be discussed.
- This is the first time that Japan is hosted the congress since 1970.

11. Which country ranked first in the latest Economic Freedom Index 2021 published by US conservative think-tank, The Heritage Foundation _____ **Singapore.**

Note:

- Globally, the Foundation rates India's economy as the 121st freest.
- Although its overall score is unchanged, improvements were made in business freedom.
- This was offset by declines in judicial effectiveness and other scores.

12. Which country has banned full facial coverings including the niqab and burqa in almost all public places _____ **Switzerland.**

Note:

- As many as 51.21 per cent of voters voted in support of the controversial proposal in the referendum.
- The approval by voters means that facial covering will be banned in all publicly accessible places, including on the streets, in public offices, on public transport, in restaurants, shops and in the countryside.

13. Which country ranked at top among developing countries in the new country-readiness index 2021 released by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in its 'Technology and Innovation Report 2021' _____ **India.**

Note:

- The index ranked India at 43 while the estimated one based on per capita income was 108. This meant that India over performed other countries by 65 ranking positions.
- India was followed by the Philippines, which over performed by 57 ranking positions.

14. Which country is going to set up a Center of Excellence for the dairy sector in Rajasthan _____ **Denmark.**

Note:

- Denmark Ambassador Freddy Svane discussed the idea at a meeting with chief minister Ashok Gehlot
- The possibilities of Denmark's cooperation in the field of water conservation and purification were also discussed in the meeting.

15. Which country has launched its first military exercise in space in March 2021 to evaluate its ability to defend its satellites and other defense equipment from an attack _____ **France**.

Note:

- This is the first for the French army and even a first in Europe.
- The exercise, codenamed "AsterX" in memory of the first French satellite from 1965, will be based on 18 simulated events in an operations room.
- During the drill, the French military will monitor a potentially dangerous space object as well as a threat to its own satellite from another foreign power possessing a considerable space force.

16. Which country has received ten state-of-the-art railway passenger coaches from India as part of the supply of 160 coaches by the Rail India Technical and Economic Service (RITES) _____ **Sri Lanka**.

Note:

- This supply of coaches to Sri Lankan Railways by RITES is being financed through an Indian Line of Credit.
- Recently, Sri Lanka approved the development of the West Container Terminal (WCT) after it unilaterally cancelled Indian and Japanese participation in the development of the East Container Terminal at Colombo.

17. With which country Russia has agreed to jointly build a research station on or around the moon, setting the stage for a new space race _____ **China**.

Note:

- The United States and the Soviet Union, followed by its successor state, Russia, have long dominated space exploration, putting the first astronauts in space and on the moon and later collaborating on the International Space Station that has been in orbit for two decades.

18. Which country has developed world's most powerful supercomputer 'Fugaku' _____ **Japan**.

Note:

- Japanese scientific research institute RIKEN and Fujitsu began development six years ago with an aim to make the device core of Japan's computing infrastructure.
- Now, as Fugaku is fully open and available for shared use, Japan's Research Organization for Information Science and Technology (RIST) has selected 74 projects that will use the supercomputer in FY2021.

Honor & Awards

1. Who received the Best Woman Boxer of the Tournament Award at the 30th Youth International Boxing Tournament 'Adriatic Pearl' _____ **Vinka**.

Note:

- For her magnificent show, Vinka received the Best Woman Boxer of the Tournament award.
- With two medals in the men's category, the 19-member Indian team concluded its campaign with an overall second position (12 medals).

2. According to Hurun Global Rich List 2021, Reliance Industries (RIL) chairman, what is the rank of Mukesh Ambani as the richest person of the world _____ **8th**.

Note:

- The List was topped by Elon Musk (CEO of Tesla), Jeff Bezos (CEO of Amazon) & Bernard Arnault (CEO of LVMH-Louis Vuitton).

- Hurun Global Rich List 2021 is the 10th Year of ranking. It ranked 3, 228 Billionaires from 2, 402 companies & 68 countries
3. According to the 10th Edition of Hurun Global Rich List 2021 who emerged as the richest person of the world _____ **Elon Musk**.
Note:
- Tesla chief Elon Musk bagged the top spot with net worth \$197 billion.
 - Jeff Bezos ranked second with \$189 billion net worth, followed by Bernard Arnault
 - Asia's richest person and Reliance Industries chairman Mukesh Ambani is ranked 8th
 - Total wealth of all billionaires across the globe surged 32% (\$3.5 trillion) in 2020.
4. Who has been declared as the winner of the 30th Bihari Puraskar for 2020 for his Hindi book of Criticism, titled Taslima: Sangharsh aur Sahitya _____ **Mohankrishna Bohara**.
Note:
- Mohankrishna Bohara will be awarded 30th Bihari Puraskar for 2020 for his Hindi book of Criticism, titled Taslima: Sangharsh aur Sahitya in New Delhi
 - His book was published in 2016.
 - Bihari Puraskar: It carries an award money of two lakh 50 thousand rupees, a Citation and Plaque. It is one of the three literary awards instituted by K.K. Birla Foundation in 1991.
5. Who has been adjudged as the BBC India Sportswoman of the Year award for 2020 _____ **Koneru Humpy**.
Note:
- The award was based on a public vote in which Humpy beat sprinter Dutee Chand, shooter Manu Bhaker, wrestler Vinesh Phogat and hockey captain Rani Rampal.
 - Humpy won the World Rapid Chess Championship in December 2019 after a two-year maternity break.
 - She then won the Cairns Cup in 2020.
6. Who will be conferred with the International Federation of Film Archives (FIAF) Award 2021 _____ **Amitabh Bachchan**.
Note:
- The veteran actor will be the first Indian cinema personality to be bestowed with the FIAF Award for his dedication and contribution to the preservation of the world's film heritage.
 - Hollywood filmmakers and previous recipients of the FIAF Award — Martin Scorsese and Christopher Nolan — will present the award to Bachchan during a virtual showcase scheduled to take place on March 19.
7. President Ram Nath Kovind presented a decorated with the emblem of the Indian Republic and a letter of appreciation to _____ **Kiran Bedi**.
Note:
- Kiran Bedi was removed as the Lieutenant Governor of Puducherry on February 16 by the President of India and Tamilisai Soundararajan took additional charge as the Lieutenant Governor on February 18.
8. Name the Indian women who has been conferred with the Top 20 Global Women of Excellence Award for 2020 at a US event _____ **Tamilisai Soundararajan**.
Note:
- She joined a league of extraordinary women achievers across the world chosen for the award, including US Vice President Kamala Harris.
 - The award instituted by the US Congressional Multi Advisory Task Force led by Congressman Danny K. Davis, Representative of Illinois's 7th Congressional district, was presented during the 9th Congressional International Women's Day Gala at Naperville, Illinois.

Sports News

1. Who partnered with Ankita Raina to win the WTA 250 Doubles title at Phillip Island Trophy Tennis Tournament _____
Kamilla Radhikova.

Note:

- The pair beat Russia's Anna Blinkova and Anastasia Potapova 2-6, 6-4, 10-7.
- This is Ankita's first title on the WTA tour.
- The win will help Ankita, 28, enter the top 100 of the WTA rankings in doubles with the live rankings currently showing her in the 94th position.

2. Who becomes the first cricketer to have 100 million followers on social media platform Instagram _____ **Virat Kohli.**

Note:

- The 32-year-old Kohli is also the first person in the Asia-Pacific region to achieve the feat.
- Kohli is also the fourth most followed sports person on Instagram.
- Portugal football star Cristiano Ronaldo tops the chart with 265 million followers, ahead of Argentina football captain and FC Barcelona legend Lionel Messi and Brazil's Neymar, who are second and third in the list with 186 million and 147 million followers respectively.

3. Name the Indian shuttler who has won the women's singles title in badminton at Uganda International Badminton Tournament 2021, held in Kampala _____ **Malvika Bansod.**

Note:

- Varun beat his Indian counterpart Sankar Muthusamy by 21-18 16-21 21-17 to win men's singles final.
- Malvika won 17-21 25-23 21-10 over compatriot Anupama Upadhyaya in the women singles summit clash.

4. Varun Kapur is associated with which sports _____ **Badminton.**

Note:

- Varun beat his Indian counterpart Sankar Muthusamy by 21-18 16-21 21-17 to win men's singles final.
- Malvika won 17-21 25-23 21-10 over compatriot Anupama Upadhyaya in the women singles summit clash.

5. Who won the sixth edition of the New Delhi Marathon in men's category _____ **Srinu Bugatha.**

Note:

- Bugatha clocked a personal best of 2 hours 14 minutes and 59 seconds which was shy of the 2 hours 11 minutes and 30 seconds that he was targeting to earn himself a run in the Tokyo Olympics.
- Uttarakhand's Nitendra Singh Rawat (2:18:54) and Army Sports Institute's Rashpal Singh (2:18:57) clinched the silver and bronze medal in the men's elite category.

6. Who won the sixth edition of the New Delhi Marathon in women's category _____ **Sudha Singh.**

Note:

- Sudha, who was aiming for a hat-trick of Olympic appearances, won the women's title with a timing of 2:43:41.
- That was, however, off the national record of 2:30:00 which would have earned her a ticket to Tokyo.
- Maharashtra's Jyoti Gawate (2:58:23) and Ladakh's Jigmet Dolma (3:04:52) clinched the silver and bronze medal, respectively among the women.

7. Name the Indian shuttler who won silver medal in the BWF Swiss Open Super 300 in Basel _____ **PV Sindhu.**

Note:

- She lost to World No. 3 Spaniard and reigning Olympic champion Carolina Marin in the final of the women's singles event.
- The World Champion shuttler who has faced a lot of criticism lately for lacklustre performances in the last year had entered the semifinal stage of a BWF tournament after 19 months.

8. Name the Indian boxer who won the gold medal in the Boxam International Tournament in Castellon, Spain _____
Manish Kaushik.

Note:

- The 2018 Commonwealth Games silver medallist Kaushik, who returned into the ring for the first time after the Asian Olympic Qualifiers held in March last year, beat Denmark's Nikolai Terteryan with a split 3-2 decision in the men's 63kg summit bout.
- However, the World Championship bronze medallist Vikas Krishan went down fighting 4-1 against local favourite Ndiaye Sissokho to settle for a silver medal in the men's 69kg.

9. Which smartphone company has back as the title sponsor of the Indian Premium League cricket tournament _____ **Vivo.**

Note:

- The company, which competes with players like Xiaomi and Samsung in the Indian market, also stated that it will expand its portfolio of premium devices, and focus on new technologies like 5G.
 - This year's edition of IPL will run from April 9 to May 30 across six venues -- Mumbai, Bengaluru, Chennai, Delhi and Kolkata.
10. The National Anti-Doping Agency (NADA) has imposed a ban for 4 year on Madhavan R for violating the NADA's code on the usage of prohibited substances. He is associated with which sports _____ **Weightlifting**.
- Note:**
- The Anti-Doping Disciplinary Panel (ADDP) has banned Madhavan R for 4 years.
 - Madhavan R was tested positive for the prohibited substance Phentermine & Mephentermine.
 - The athletes have an option to appeal against the ADDP's sanction to the higher panel Anti-Doping Appeals Panel (ADAP).
11. The International Shooting Sport Federation (ISSF) Shotgun World Cup 2021 was held in ____ **Cairo, Egypt**.
- Note:**
- The Shotgun tournament took place for disciplines of Trap Shooting & Skeet Shooting.
 - The Indian Women's Trap Team trio of Kirti Gupta, Manisha Keer & Rajeshwari Kumari won the Silver medal in the event. They were defeated by Russia in the Final.
12. Who becomes the first cricketer to score 3,000 runs in T-20 International cricket _____ **Virat Kohli**.
- Note:**
- The India captain reached the milestone in his 87th match in the shortest format.
 - Kohli's India teammate Rohit Sharma can also reach the landmark in the ongoing series between India and England.
13. Bhavani Devi is associated with which sport who becomes the first ever Indian to qualify for the Tokyo Olympic Games _____ **Fencing**.
- Note:**
- The sabre fencer secured a spot in the World Cup in Hungary after the hosts lost in the quarterfinals of the team event, allowing South Korea to progress to the semi-final.
 - Bhavani Devi qualifies through the Adjusted Official Ranking (AOR) Method.
14. Who becomes the first Indian woman cricketer to complete 10,000 runs across all format _____ **Mithali Raj**.
- Note:**
- With this, she also became the 2nd largest woman scorer in international cricket
 - She achieved the feat with a boundary off Anne Bosch in 28th over of India's innings during the ongoing 3rd ODI against South Africa.
 - She scored 663 runs in 10 Test matches with a best score of 214, while she has 6974 and 2364 runs from 212 ODIs and 89 T20 Internationals

Books and Authors

1. Who has authored the book titled "Advantage India: The Story of Indian Tennis" _____ **Anindya Dutta**.
- Note:**
- Advantage India is a well-researched account of the journey of Indian tennis, with a special section on the Doubles game and on women's tennis in India.
 - The book is published by Westland publications.
 - The book provides the extensive history of Indian tennis on both men's and women's side.
2. Who authored the book titled "The Lost Soul" _____ **Olga Tokarczuk**.
- Note:**
- It is a story that beautifully weaves together the voice of the Nobel Prize-winning Polish novelist Olga Tokarczuk and the finely detailed pen-and-ink drawings of illustrator Joanna Concejo, who together create a parallel narrative universe full of secrets, evocative of another time. Here a man has forgotten what makes his heart feel full.
3. Who has authored the book titled "Joe Biden: American Dreamer" a biography of American President, Joe Biden _____ **Evan Osnos**.
- Note:**

- The author portrays President Joseph R. Biden Jr. as a man who has sustained a 50-year political career and became the President and a man who is marked with deep personal losses.
 - The book captures the characters and features of the presidential election.
4. Who has authored the book titled “Baanjh: Incomplete Lives of Complete Women” _____ **Susmita Mukherjee**.
Note:
- The book is a collection of 11 short stories that portray the lives of women from various social backgrounds.
 - The book was published by Readomania Publishing.
 - The book features the world of the women who are living in the excluded society to the women living in higher levels of society.
5. Who has authored the book titled “Essays on Srimanta Sankaradeva” _____ **Dr Sanjib Kumar Borkakoti**.
Note:
- “**Essays on Srimanta Sankaradeva**”, the new book of **Dr Sanjib Kumar Borkakoti** highlights hitherto unexplored areas of Indian culture and philosophy.
 - The author has written the essays on the lasting contributions of the medieval polymath Srimanta Sankaradeva.
6. Who has authored the book titled “Karunanidhi: A Life” _____ **A.S. Panneerselvan**.
Note:
- The book tells the story of the man who became a metaphor for modern Tamil Nadu, where language, empowerment, self-respect, art, literary forms and films coalesced to lend a unique vibrancy to politics.

Science and Defence

1. Which country hosted the multinational Exercise Desert Flag-VI for the first time _____ **UAE**.
Note:
- The exercise is being held from March 3 to 21 at the Al-Dhafra airbase in the United Arab Emirates (UAE).
 - The Exercise Desert Flag is an annual multi-national large force employment warfare exercise hosted by the UAE Air Force.
 - The aim of the exercise is to provide operational exposure to the participating forces, while training them to undertake simulated air combat operations in a controlled environment.
2. Which entity has organized ‘India Telecom 2021’ – an Exclusive International Business Expo under Market Access Initiative Scheme (MAI) _____ **TRAI**.
Note:
- The main objective of the event is to provide opportunities to Indian telecom exporters to meet qualified overseas buyers.
 - TEPC has created this platform to bring potential buyers from across the globe and quality telecom equipment manufacturers and ICT services solution providers from India under one roof to interact and finalize business deals.
3. Special forces of which country is being trained by Indian Army in "Combat Free Fall" to help them build their capabilities _____ **Turkmenistan**.
Note:
- The Indian Army shared the information of the training on Twitter and said it was building bonds of friendship with the Turkmenistani forces.
 - Special Forces Training School Indian Army has commenced training of Turkmenistan Special Forces in Combat Free Fall as a precursor to a series of customised courses to follow and help build the capability of the Turkmenistan Special Forces
4. Who becomes 3rd batsman to hit 6 sixes in an over in international cricket _____ **Kieron Pollard**.
Note:
- Pollard achieved the feat when he hit Sri Lanka's Akila Dananjaya out of the park 6 times in the 6th over of West Indies' successful chase in the first T20I at the Coolidge Cricket Ground in Antigua.

- Kieron Pollard joins World Cup-winning former India all-rounder Yuvraj Singh as the only other batsman to hit 6 sixes in an over in T20I cricket.
5. Name the Indian wrestler who won the gold in the men's 65kg event at the Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series in Rome _____ **Bajrang Punia**.
- Note:**
- Bajrang defeated Mongolia's Tulga Tumur Ochir 2-2 by criteria in the final of the freestyle event.
 - The 27-year-old grappler secured a hard-fought win over the Mongolia wrestler.
6. Name the Indian wrestler who won the gold in the women's 53kg event at the Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series in Rome _____ **Vinesh Phogat**.
- Note:**
- She defeated Canada's Diana Weicker 4-0 in the final of the Matteo Pellicone Ranking Series
 - It was her second gold medal in two weeks, Vinesh had won a gold medal in Kyiv last week and this performance would give her the belief that her preparations for the biggest sporting event are on the right track.
7. The second edition of the joint military exercise 'Dustlik' has been conducted between India and which country _____ **Uzbekistan**.
- Note:**
- The second edition of exercise Dustlik is aimed at carrying out joint counter-terror operations in a mountainous rural and urban scenario.
 - Intelligence-based surgical operations, special forces tracking techniques, surveillance through a hi-tech command post, slithering operations from helicopters were some of the key elements of the exercise.
8. The second edition of the joint military exercise 'Dustlik' was convened between India and Uzbekistan in which state of India _____ **Uttarakhand**.
- Note:**
- The Indian Army was represented by 13 Kumaon known as the Rezag La battalion famous for its heroics in the battle of Rezag La in 1962 war with China.
 - The first one took place in November 2019 near Tashkent in Uzbekistan.
9. With which space agency the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO) has completed development of a Synthetic Aperture Radar (SAR) capable of producing extremely high-resolution images for a joint earth observation satellite mission _____ **NASA**.
- Note:**
- NASA-ISRO SAR (NISAR) is a joint collaboration for a dual-frequency L and S-band SAR for earth observation.
 - "NISAR will be the first satellite mission to use two different radar frequencies (L-band and S-band) to measure changes in our planet's surface less than a centimeter across".
10. Name the indigenously developed Advanced Light Torpedo (TAL), maiden flight trials of which was conducted successfully _____ **Shyena**.
- Note:**
- This was the country's first such trial where the indigenous lightweight torpedo was fired from a fixed-wing aircraft.
 - The lightweight torpedo was designed, developed, produced and inducted into services a decade ago and is used against underwater platforms as part of anti-submarine warfare (ASW).
11. Lunar Polar Exploration (LUPEX) is joint Robotic Lunar mission of India and which country that aims to send a lander and rover to the Moon's south pole in the year 2024 _____ **Japan**.
- Note:**
- LUPEX is a robotic Lunar mission that aims to send a lander and rover to the Moon's south pole in the year 2024.
 - The discussions took place in a virtual meeting between ISRO & JAXA.
 - The Indian side was led by ISRO Chairman K Sivan while the Japan delegation was represented by Hiroshi Yamakawa, President of JAXA.

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